
Mount Cross Chronicle

March 2023



601 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541
Phone: 928-474-2552
www.mountcross.org

Sunday Worship Services

9:30 a.m.
Worship/Communion Service

Livestreamed
Online Worship Service

Supply Pastor
Rev. Lance Kittleson
474-2552
chapkitt@icloud.com

Music Director
Daria Mason
daria1024mason@gmail.com

Accompanist
Angeline Ng

Office Administrator
Lenore M. White
secretary@mountcross.org

Custodian
Keri Morris

Pastor's Ponderings

In the 'bad old days,' when COVID restrictions precluded gathering together in any form of worship, Sunday or Lenten, my cousin and I would meet in one of the churches of my two-point parish to do a Facebook Live service. He would run the slides and music on the computer as I led in reciting the liturgy and sermon. The darkened sanctuary enabled our simple projector/screen/microphone set-up to clearly focus on the worship/sermon slides on the screen of the chancel wall next to the huge walled cross. Then off camera my cousin, who has a wonderful uproarious laugh that cannot be contained after a decent punch line, would provide unseen, but audible 'laugh tracks' whenever warranted.

Needless to say, Lenten worship with its usual soup suppers and short service were not the same. No members of the church coming together on cold winter Wednesdays to eat, laugh (and maybe gossip a little?), and worship. There were none of the usual evidence of a mid-week Lutheran Lenten season.

But I found that "not the same" isn't the same as "bad." In a way it was more Lenten-like for me than I had felt for many years. The surrounding darkness, the uncertainty of the pandemic, the confusion, fears and anxiety of 'normal living' in increasingly crazy times all made for a much more 'real Lenten journey.'

If someone can't identify, I suspect the problem might be too much Prozac or other psychologically deadening medications. Life simply produces those wild, scary emotions within all of us in the course of being alive.

In those honest moments of facing our emotions we may rightly ask as the Psalmist did, "From where is my help to come?" (Psalm 121:1) For over 3,000 years Jews and Christians have been reading the answer – "My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth." The Old Testament songbook, **the Psalms**, is beloved by so many for so long because it expresses as any good song/poem does our deepest feelings and fears.

During this Lenten season as we prepare once again for the agony and glory of the Cross of Christ, we will be invited to connect to the 'honest to God' emotions of the Psalms, so that no darkness around us, no memories of the pandemic, no ordeal in life can diminish our hope in the promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Join us in six weeks of this Lenten journey, letting the Psalms 'rant and rave, cry and scream, sing and laugh in **thanksgiving**' for us. Even as we are surrounded by life's dark times, may the Psalms lead us into the assurance of God's presence, love and peace. For it is in the Cross of Christ that we find forgiveness, hope and true life that we yearn for in this rough and tumble world.

Lenten blessings to you all.

Lance
aka Supply Pastor



Our **†**
STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity



SM This year, Mount Cross' participation in the SouperBowl collection on Superbowl Sunday resulted in \$559.00, which will be divided between the two food banks in Payson: St. Vincent De Paul and the Deacon's Food Pantry. Non-perishable food in the amount of approximately 85 items were delivered to the Deacon's Food Pantry. It was wonderful to have our very own Eagle Scout, Gary Greer, assist in this collection.

Thank you, Mount Cross, for the generosity that you show through giving to local organizations that assist those who are hungry in the community.



2022 Lenten Schedule

Wednesday, March 1 st	Fingerfood Supper Cancelled due to expected severe weather	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service Cancelled due to expected severe weather	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 5 th	2 nd Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 8 th	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 12 th	3 rd Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 15 th	Fingerfood Supper**	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 19 th	4 th Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 22 nd	Fingerfood Supper**	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 26 th	5 th Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 29 th	Fingerfood Supper**	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 2 nd	Palm Sunday	9:30 a.m.
Thursday, April 6 th	Maundy Thursday Service – Mount Cross	6:00 p.m.
Friday, April 7 th	Ecumenical Good Friday Service – Community Presbyterian	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 9 th	Easter Sunday Service – Mount Cross	9:30 a.m.

**This year we are not having committees prepare the suppers since some people are in multiple committees, thus we are asking that a couple of people get together to prepare a meal for one Wednesday during Lent. A sign-up sheet is available on the coffee/snack table.

Mount Cross Financial Report (January 2023)



2023 Approved Budget	\$326,229.00
Income	\$16,797.00 (5.10% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures	\$16,288.00 (4.99% of 2023 budget)
Total given to the Mortgage Fund during January 2023	\$2,670.00
Total paid out in 2023 for mortgage	\$2,865.00


Please note: above amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2023
Mount Cross. \$0.00

Our January contributions exceeded expenses, so we started the year off well. Thank you to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team

SLICE & BAKE...
 Anyone can do it! Go to your grocery store, buy your favorite kind(s) of cookie dough, then slice and bake.
EASY...only a knife, spatula, and cookie sheet to wash!
 Bring your newly baked cookies to Mount Cross on Sunday morning and watch your cookies disappear after the service – eat one or two yourself, especially good with coffee!



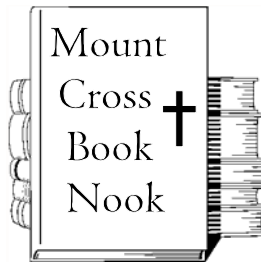

The study for the past two months has been centered on the Ten Commandments. Pastor Lance Kittleson has also covered the Ten Commandments as the Beatitudes in past sermons.

As a part of preparing for the January meeting, with no attendance since I had to change the time, I also pulled my copy of Luther's Small Catechism. In thinking about the commandments, they are hard to always follow even with trying really hard to do so. For me it is my mouth. My early childhood experiences taught me a whole litany of swear words, including giving **Jesus** a middle initial. I try very hard not to use his name in vain but I admit I do occasionally mess up. I pray that God understands that I am trying not to do so. I guess my day with St Peter will be difficult.

Our WELCA group is small, but we keep going. Gone are the large enthusiastic folks who used to attend prior to the pandemic. If you wish to attend, we have a printed magazine or copies of the lesson in the narthex on a clipboard near the church mailboxes.

As we started Lent late in February, this is a time for contemplation...of self-analysis. Am I doing what is needed to be a strong Christian? Am I looking for things that enhance our walk with God? Am I willing to sacrifice some of my needs to help others? Am I taking time with God on a regular basis? Do I need a recharge? Find purpose in your walk with God. Find the thing that buoys your spirit preparation for Easter and Christ's resurrection. Join the disciples on the Damascus Road walk. You may find a spiritual renewal. AMEN.

Alice Natale
WELCA president



The library cart features Lenten related books during the month of March. There are many other books available on the shelves in the Ponderosa Room that you are encouraged to peruse. A great way to spend a cold March day is to curl up with a book!

Your Librarian,
Eloise Jones



Our world needs prayer. We are at sticks and stones all over the world. Faith in God is not celebrated. Helping the poor or those who have experienced great loss requires both prayer and a willingness to help. One of the attributes of Lutheran World Relief is that the church stays through the rebuilding to a large degree. I know we receive requests for donations to that entity and now it is something to consider as we start the Lenten journey.



Lent began on Wednesday, February 22nd. We will again use the pink pigs as a vehicle for you to donate checks (written to Mount Cross with World Hunger in the memo line) or cash as gifting sources during the 40 days of Lent. Our gifts will be collected on Palm Sunday, April 2nd.

A small table in the narthex has copies of the *40 Days of Giving* Lenten Study Guide and pink pig boxes for depositing "World Hunger" money. These materials are available for your use during this Lenten season.

God's work. Our hands.



One of our good examples of working is our men who are part of the Property Committee. They work to keep our grounds clean and the buildings "up to snuff." If you have time, this is a way to help and to enjoy donuts, served with good coffee, and friendship. Women take care of other tasks, such as providing food items for potlucks, celebrations, and funerals. There is always something to do, one just needs look for something that fits the talents bestowed by God.



Altar Guild will meet on Thursday, March 2nd at 10:00 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room. If you feel called to serve the Lord by setting His table, you are invited to attend this meeting.



March Birthdays

- 3 Jean Petrie
- 4 Ray Wiebe
- 6 Tony Andretta
- 14 Sharon Vaplon
- 24 Audrey Ricker
- 27 Karen Ritterbusch

March Wedding Anniversaries

- 5 Bill/Jean Petrie
- 28 Gary/Vickie Weins

March Baptismal Anniversaries

- 15 Tony Andretta



Due to Spring break, Mount Cross will not be serving a sloppy joe meal during the month of March. Next date for Mount Cross to serve a meal at PCK will be Thursday, April 20th.

Sunday Service



9:30 AM

EVERY Sunday
In-House & Livestream

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Worship Services

Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary; live stream of the service is available on Facebook.

Sundays, 9:30 AM

WELCA Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study using the studies found in the WELCA publication "Gather". All women are welcome to attend.

2nd Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the Ponderosa Room.

Seekers of Truth Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study which will be focusing on the biblical prophets. All are welcome to attend.

3rd Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the Ponderosa Room.



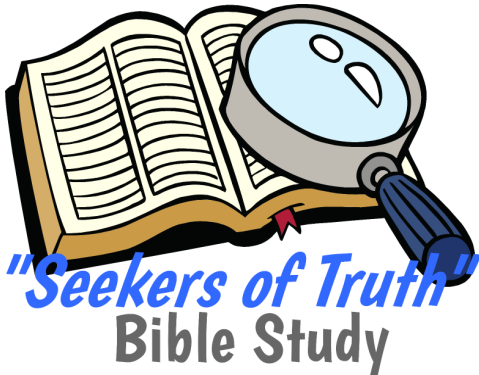
The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, March 9th, at 10:00 a.m.

It is a four-session study of the 10 commandments by ELCA pastor and Bible study author Christa von Zychlin. She will help us see how these commandments are more than they may appear at first glance. The March session, entitled "Sanctity of Life and Love," will focus on the fifth and sixth commandments. Get ready to explore old and new interpretations of God's laws!

As an added bonus, a corresponding video supplement can be accessed through this link:

<https://www.gathermagazine.org/march-2023-video-supplement-to-the-ten-commandments-bible-study-session-3/>

Seekers of Truth Bible study, support, social, and friendship group, is held on the third Thursday of each month in the Ponderosa Room at 10:00 a.m. March 16th is the date for this month's meeting. Refreshments will be served; BYOB (Bring Your own Beverage).



The group continues to focus on sixteen major and minor Old Testament prophets. Members of the group will be given handouts before each meeting with information about the prophet or prophets to be discussed. There is NO book requirement. Members of the group who have study Bibles will be encouraged to read about each prophet in their own Bible and to share with the group what their Bibles say about each prophet.

The last part of the meeting will be a time for socializing, eating, and supporting each other.

Jan Bartoli is the facilitator of the group and Sue Bobek is the discussion leader. If you have questions, suggestions, or wish to be a part of this group, please call Jan at 928-517-1119 or Sue at 928-478-6166.

ALL ARE WELCOME!